# The VALLEY OF THE GIANTS

BY PETER B. KYNE

AUTHOR OF "CAPPY RICKS"



### SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I.—Pioneer in the California redwood region, John Cardigan, at forty-seven, is the leading citizen of Sequoia, owner of mills, ships, and many acres of timber, a widower after three years of married life, and father of two-day-old Bryce Cardigan.

CHAPTER II.—At fourteen Bryce makes the acquaintance of Shirley Sumner, a visitor to Sequoia, and his junior by a few years. Together they visit the Valley of the Giants, sacred to John Cardigan and his son as the burial place of Bryce's mother, and part with mutual regret.

CHAPTER III.—While Bryce is at college John Cardigan meets with heavy business losses and for the first time views the future with uncertainty.

CHAPTER IV.—After graduation from college, and a trip abroad, Bryce Cardigan comes home. On the train he meets Shirley Sumner, on her way to Sequoia to make her home there with her uncle, Col. Pennington. Bryce learns that his father's eyesight has failed and that Col. Pennington is seeking to take advantage of the old man's business misfortunes.

CHAPTER V.—In the Valley of the Giants young Cardigan finds a tree felled directly across his mother's grave. Indications are that it was cut down to secure the burl, and evidence seems to show that Pennington and his woods-boss, Jules Rondeau, are implicated in the outrage.

CHAPTER VI.—Dining with Col. Pennington and his niece, Bryce finds the room paneled with redwood burl, confirming his suspicions of Pennington's guilt. In a diplomatic way, unperceived by Shirley, the two men declare war.

CHAPTER VII.—Pennington refuses to renew his logging contract with the Cardigans, believing his action means bankruptcy for the latter. Bryce forces Rondeau to confess he felled the tree in the Valley of the Giants, at Pennington's order. After punishing the man, Bryce hurls him at Col. Pennington, who, with Shirley, had witnessed the fight. Pennington is humiliated, and the girl, indignant, orders Bryce to leave her and forget their friendship. He leaves, but refuses to accept dismissal.

CHAPTER VIII.—Returning to Sequoia, the train on which Shirley, her uncle, and Bryce are traveling, breaks away from the locomotive, and Bryce, who could have escaped, at the risk of his life cuts out the caboose and saves them from certain death, being painfully injured in doing so.

CHAPTER IX.—Moira McTavish, childhood friend of Bryce and employed in his office, makes Shirley's acquaintance and the two become friends. Needing money badly, John Cardigan offers to sell Pennington the Valley of the Giants, but the Colonel, confident the property must soon be his through the bankruptcy of his enemies, contemptuously refuses. Unknown to her uncle, Shirley buys the Valley and the Cardigans have a new lease of business life. They interest capital and decide on a scheme to parallel Pennington's logging railroad.

CHAPTER X.—Buchanan Ogilvy, railroad contractor and Bryce's college friend, is decided on by the Cardigans as the man to figure as the builder of the proposed railroad. Bryce goes to San Francisco to meet him.

CHAPTER XI.—Ogilvy ostentatiously begins work of surveying for the line, which is announced as a proposed through route. Pennington, vaguely alarmed, decides to block operations by making it impossible to secure a franchise for the line through Sequoia. In this he plans to enlist the aid of the mayor, Poundstone.

CHAPTER XII.—"Buck" Ogilvy, as builder of the projected Northern California & Oregon railroad, meets Moira McTavish and is much impressed. Bryce and his father make plans for securing a franchise for the line from the city council.

"Two of the Five Councilmen Are for Sale."

When Moira had left him, Bryce was roused from bitter introspections by the ringing of the telephone. To his amazement Shirley Sumner was calling him!

"You're a wee bit surprised, aren't you, Mr. Cardigan?" she said teasingly. "You're woudering why I have telephoned to you?"

"No, I haven't had time. The suddenness of it has left me more or less dumb. Why did you ring up?"

"I wanted some advice. Suppose you wanted very, very much to know what two people were talking about, but found yourself in a position where you couldn't eavesdrop. What would you do?"

"I wouldn't eavesdrop," he told her severely. "That isn't a nice thing to do, and I didn't think you would contemplate anything that isn't nice."

"But I have every moral, ethical, and financial right to be a party to that conversation, only—well——"

"With you present there would be no conversation—is that it?"

"Exactly, Mr. Cardigan."

"And it is of the utmost importance that you should know what is said?"

"Yes."

"And you do not intend to use your knowledge of the conversation, when gained, for an illegal or unethical purpose?"

"I do not. On the contrary, if I am aware of what is being planned, I can prevent others from doing something illegal and unethical."

"In that event, Shirley, I should say you are quite justified in eavesdropping."

"But how can I do it? I can't hide in a closet and listen."

"Buy a dictograph and have it hidden in the room where the conversation takes place. It will record every word of it."

"Where can I buy one?"

"In San Francisco."

"Will you telephone to your San Francisco office and have them buy one for me and ship it to you, together with directions for using?"

"Shirley, this is most extraordinary."

"I quite realize that. May I depend upon you to oblige me in this matter?"

"Certainly. But why pick on me, of all persons, to perform such a mission for you?"

"I can trust you to forget that you have performed it."

"Thank you. I think you may safely trust me. And I shall attend to the matter immediately."

"You are very kind, Mr. Cardigan. How is your dear old father? Moira told me some time ago that he was ill."

"He's quite well again, thank you. It's too bad the circumstances are such that we, who started out to be such agreeable friends, see so little of each other, Shirley."

"Indeed, it is. However, it's all your fault. I have told you once how you can obviate that distressing situation. But you're so stubborn, Mr. Cardigan."

"I haven't got to the point where I like crawling on my hands and knees," he flared back at her. "Even for your sake, I decline to simulate friendship or tolerance for your uncle; hence I must be content to let matters stand as they are between us."

She laughed lightly. "So you are still uncompromisingly belligerent—still after Uncle Seth's scalp?"

"Yes; and I think I'm going to get it. I'm not fighting for myself alone, but for a thousand dependents—for a principle—for an ancient sentiment that was my father's and is now mine. You do not understand."

"I understand more than you give me credit for, and some day you'll realize it. I understand just enough to make me feel sorry for you. I understand what even my uncle doesn't suspect at present, and that is that your're the directing genius of the Northern California Oregon railroad and hiding behind your friend Ogilvy. Now, listen to me, Bryce Cardigan: You're never going to build that road. Do you understand?"

The suddenness of her attack amazed him to such an extent that he did not take the trouble to contradict her. Instead he blurted out, angrily and defiantly: "I'll build that road if it costs me my life—if it costs me you. Understand! I'm in this fight to win."

"You will not build that road," she reiterated.

"Why?"

"Because I shall not permit you to. I have some financial interest in the Laguna Grande Lumber company, and it is not to that financial interest that you should build the N. C. O."

"How did you find out that I was behind Ogilvy?"

"Intuition. Then I accused you or it, and you admitted it."

"I suppose you're going to tell your uncle now," he retorted witheringly.

"On the contrary, I am not. If it will comfort you the least bit, you have my word of honor that I shall not reveal to my uncle the identity of the man behind the N. C. O. The fact is, both you and Uncle Seth annoy me exceedingly. How lovely everything would have been if you two hadn't started this feud and forced upon me the task of trying to be fair and impartial to you both. Forgive my slang, but—I'm going to hand you each a poke soon."

"Shirley," he told her earnestly, "listen carefully to what I am about to say: I love you. I've loved you from the day I first met you. I shall always love you; and when I get around to it, I'm going to ask you to marry me. At present, however, that is a right I do not possess. However, the day I acquire the right I shall exercise it."

"And when will that day be?" Very softly, in awesome tones!

"The day I drive the last spike in the N. C. O."

Fell a silence. Then; "I'm glad, Bryce Cardigan, you're not a quitter. Good-bye, good luck—and don't forget my errand." She hung up and sat at the telephone for a moment, dimpled chin in dimpled hand. "How I'd hate you if I could handle you!" she murmured.

Following this exasperating but illuminating conversation with Shirley Sumner over the telephone, Bryce Cardigan was a distressed and badly worried man. For an hour he sat slouched in his chair, chin on breast, the while he reviewed every angle of the situation. He found it impossible, however, to disassociate the business from the personal aspects of his relations with Shirley, and he recalled that she had the very best of reasons for placing their relations on a business basis rather a sentimental one. For the present, however, it was all a profound and disturbing mystery, and after an hour of futile concentration there came to Bryce the old childish impulse to go to his father with his troubles.

"He will be able to think without having his thoughts blotted out by a woman's face," Bryce soliloquized. "He's like one of his own redwood trees; his head is always above the storm."

Straightway Bryce left the office and went home to the old house on the knoll. John Cardigan was sitting on the veranda, and from a stand beside him George Sea Otter entertained him with a phonograph selection—"The Suwanee River," sung by a male quartette. He could not see, but with the intuition of the blind he knew.

"What is it, son?" he demanded gently as Bryce came up the low steps. "George, choke that contraption off."

Bryce took his father's hand. "I'm in trouble, John Cardigan," he said simply, "and I'm not big enough to handle it alone."

The leonine old man smiled, and his smile had all the sweetness of a benediction. His boy was in trouble and had come to him. Good! Then he would not fail him. "Sit down, son, and tell the old man all about it. Be-

"Sit Down, Son, and Tell the Old Man All About It."

gin at the beginning and let me have all the angles of the angle."

Bryce obeyed, and for the first time John Cardigan learned of his son's acquaintance with Shirley Sumner and the fact that she had been present in Pennington's woods the day Bryce had gone there to settle the score with Jules Rondeau.

With the patience and gentleness of a confessor John Cardigan heard the story now, and though Bryce gave no hint in words that his affections were involved in the fight for the Cardigan acres yet did his father know it, for he was a parent. And his great heart went out in sympathy for his boy.

"I understand, sonny, I understand. This young lady is only one additional reason why you must win, for of course you understand she is not indifferent to you."

"I do not know that she feels for me anything stronger than a vagrant sympathy, dad, for while she is eternally feminine, nevertheless she has a masculine way of looking at many things. Her first loyalty is to her uncle; in fact, she owes none to me. And I dare say he has given her some extremely plausible reason why we should be eliminated; while I think she is sorry that it must be done, nevertheless, in a mistaken impulse of self-protection she is likely to let him do it."

"Perhaps, perhaps. Eliminate the girl, my boy. She's trying to play fair to you and her relative. Let us concentrate on Pennington."

"The entire situation hinges on that jump-crossing of his tracks on Water street."

"He doesn't know you plan to cross them, does he?"

"No."

"Then, lad, your job is to get your crossing in before he finds out, isn't it?"

"Yes, but it's an impossible task, partner. I'm not Aladdin, you know. I have to have a franchise from the city council, and I have to have rails."

"Both are procurable, my son. Induce the city council to grant you a temporary franchise tomorrow, and buy your rails from Pennington. He has a mile of track running up Laurel creek, and Laurel creek was logged out three years ago."

"But he hates me, old pal."

"The Colonel never permits sentiment to interfere with business, my son. He doesn't need the rails, and he does desire your money. Consider the rail problem settled."

"How do you stand with the mayor and the council?"

"I do not stand at all."

"That makes it bad."

"Not at all. The Cardigans are not known to be connected with the N. C. O. Send your bright friend Ogilvy after that franchise. He's the only man who can land it. Give him a free hand and tell him to deliver the goods by any means short of bribery. I know you can procure the rails and have them at the intersection of B and Water streets Thursday night. If Ogilvy can procure the temporary franchise and have it in his pocket by six o'clock Thursday night you should have that crossing in by sunup Friday morning. Then let Pennington rave. He cannot procure an injunction to restrain us from cutting his tracks, thus throwing the matter into the courts and holding us up indefinitely, because by the time he wakes up the tracks will have been cut. The best he can do then will be to fight us before the city council when we apply for our permanent franchise."

"Partner, it looks like a forlorn hope," said Bryce.

"Well, you're the boy to lead it. And it will cost but little to put in the crossing and take a chance. Remember, Bryce, once we have that crossing in it stands like a spite fence between Pennington and the law which he knows so well how to pervert to suit his ignoble purposes." He turned earnestly to Bryce and waved a trembling, admonitory finger. "Your job is to keep out of court. Once Pennington gets the law on us the issue will not be settled in our favor for years; and in the meantime—you perish. Run along, now, and hunt up Ogilvy."

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It was with a considerably lighter heart that Bryce returned to the mill office, from which he lost no time in summoning Buck Ogilvy by telephone.

"Thanks so much for the invitation," Ogilvy murmured gratefully. "I'll be down in a pig's whisper." And he was. "Bryce, you look like the devil," he declared the moment he entered the latter's private office.

"I ought to, Buck. I've just raised the devil and spilled the beans on the N. C. O."

"To whom, when and where?"

"To Pennington's niece, over the telephone about two hours ago."

Buck Ogilvy smote his left palm with his right fist. "How did you let the cat out of the bag?"

"That remarkable girl called me up and accused you of being a mere screen for me and amazed me so I admitted it."

Ogilvy dropped his red head in simulated agony and moaned. Presently he raised it and said: "Well, it might have been worse. Think of what might have happened had she called in person. She would have picked your pocket for the corporate seal, the combination of the safe and the list of stockholders, and probably ended up by gagging and binding you in your own swivel chair."

"Don't, Buck. Comfort and abuse is what I need now."

"All right. What do you want me to do to save the day?"

"Deliver to me by six o'clock Thursday night a temporary franchise from the city council, granting the N. C. O. the right to run a railroad from our drying yard across Water street at its intersection with B street and out Front street."

"Certainly. By all means! Easiest thing I do! All right, old dear! I'm on my way to do my d—dest which angels can't do no more. Nevertheless, for your sins you shall do me a favor before my heart breaks after falling down on this contract you've just given me."

"Granted, Buck. Name it."

"I'm giving a nice little private, specially cooked dinner to Miss McTavish tonight. We're going to pull it off in one of those private screened corrals in that highly decorated Chink restauraw on Third street. Moira—that is, Miss McTavish—is bringing a chaperon, one Miss Shirley Sumner. Your job is to be my chaperon and entertain Miss Sumner, who from all accounts is most brilliant and fascinating."

"Nothing doing!" Bryce almost roared. "Why, she's the girl that bluffed the secret of the N. C. O. out of me!"

"Do you hate her for it?"

"No, I hate myself."

"Then you'll come. You promised in advance, and no excuses go now. The news will be all over town by Friday morning; so why bother to keep up appearances any longer?"

And before Bryce could protest Ogilvy had thrown open the office door and called the glad tidings to Moira, who was working in the next room; whereupon Moira's wonderful eyes shone with that strange, lambent flame. She clasped her hands joyously. "Oh, how wonderful!" she exclaimed. "I've always wanted Miss Shirley to meet Mr. Bryce."

### CHAPTER XIII.

Fortunately for the situation which had so suddenly confronted him, Bryce Cardigan had Mr. Buck Ogilvy; and out of the experiences gained in other railroad-building enterprises the said Ogilvy, while startled, was not stunned by the suddenness and immensity of the order so casually given him by his youthful employer, for he had already devoted to the matter of that crossing the better part of the preceding night.

"Got to run a sandy on the mayor," Buck soliloquized as he walked rapidly uptown. "Now how shall I proceed to sneak up on that oily old cuss' blind side?"

Two blocks farther on Mr. Ogilvy paused and snapped his fingers vigorously. "Eureka!" he murmured. "I've got Poundstone by the tail on a downhill haul. Is it a cinch? Well, I just guess I should tell a man!"

He hurried to the telephone building and put in a long-distance call for the San Francisco office of the Cardigan Redwood Lumber company. When the manager came on the line Ogilvy dictated to him a message which he instructed the manager to telegraph back to him at the Hotel Sequoia one hour later; this mysterious detail attended to, he continued on to the mayor's office in the city hall.

Mayor Poundstone's bushy eyebrows arched with interest when his secretary laid upon his desk the card of Mr. Buchanan Ogilvy, vice president and general manager of the Northern California. "Ah-h-h!" he breathed with an unpleasant resemblance to a bon vivant who sees before him his favorite vintage. "I have been expecting Mr. Ogilvy to call for quite a while. Show him in."

The visitor was accordingly admitted to the great man's presence and favored with an official handshake of great heartiness. "I've been hoping to have this pleasure for quite some time, Poundstone," Buck announced easily as he disposed of his hat and overcoat on an adjacent chair. Buck's alert blue eyes opened wide in sympathy with his genial mouth, to deluge Mayor Poundstone with a smile that was friendly, guileless, confidential and singularly delightful. Mr. Ogilvy was a man possessed of tremendous personal magnetism when he chose to exert it, and that smile was ever the opening gun of his magnetic bombardment, for it was a smile that always had the effect of making the observer desire to behold it again—of disarming suspicion and establishing confidence.

"Glad you did—mighty glad," the mayor cried heartily. "I have read your articles of incorporation, Mr. Ogilvy. You will recall that they were published in the Sequoia Sentinel. It strikes me—"

"Then you know exactly what we purpose doing, and any further explanation would be superfluous," Buck interrupted amiably, glad to dispose of the matter so promptly. Again he favored the mayor with his bright smile, and the latter, now fully convinced that here was a young man of vast emprise whom it behooved him to receive in a whole-hearted and public-spirited manner, nodded vigorous approval.

"Well, that being the case, Mr. Ogil-

"What Can We Sequoians Do to Make You Happy?"

vy," he continued, "what can we Sequoians do to make you happy?"

"Why, to begin with, Mr. Poundstone, you might accept my solemn assurances that despite the skepticism which for some unknown reason appears to shroud our enterprise in the minds of some people, we have incorporated a railroad company for the purpose of building a railroad. The only thing that can possibly interfere with the project will be the declination of the city council to grant us a franchise to run our line through the city to tidewater. And I am glad to have your assurance that the city council will not drop a cold chisel in the cogs of the wheels of progress."

Mr. Poundstone had given no such assurance, but for some reason he did not feel equal to the task of contradicting this pleasant fellow. Ogilvy continued: "At the proper time we shall apply for the franchise. It will then be time enough to discuss it. In the meantime the N. C. O. plans a public dedicatory ceremony at the first breaking of ground, and I would be greatly honored, Mr. Mayor, if you would consent to turn the first shovelful of earth and deliver the address of welcome upon that occasion."

The mayor swelled like a Thanksgiving turkey. "The honor will be mine," he corrected his visitor.

"Thank you so much, sir. Well, that's another worry off my mind." With the tact of a prime minister Buck then spoke of the magic effect the building of such a line would have upon the growth of Sequoia. Sequoia, he felt convinced, was destined to become a city of at least a hundred thousand inhabitants; he rhapsodized over the progressive spirit of the community and with a wave of his hand studded the waters of Humboldt bay with the masts of the world's shipping. Suddenly he checked himself, glanced at his watch, apologized for consuming so much of His Honor's valuable time, expressed himself felicitated at knowing the Mayor, gracefully expressed his appreciation for the encouragement given his enterprise and departed.

Half an hour later the Mayor's telephone-bell rang. Buck Ogilvy was on the line. "I beg your pardon for bothering you with my affairs twice in the same day Mr. Mayor," he announced deprecatingly, "but the fact is, a condition has just arisen which necessitates the immediate employment of an attorney. The job is not a very important one and almost any lawyer would do, but in view of the fact that we must, sooner or later, employ an attorney to look after our interests locally, it occurred to me that I might as well make the selection of a permanent attorney now. I am a stranger in this city Mr. Poundstone. Would it be imposing on your consideration if I asked you to recommend such a person?"

"Why, not at all, not at all! Delighted to help you, Mr. Ogilvy. Let me see now. Cadman & Banes, with offices in the Knights of Pythias Temple, would be just the people, although there is Rodney McKendrick, in the Chamber of Commerce building—a splendid fellow, Mr. Ogilvy, and most desirable. And if I may be pardoned a dash of paternal ego, there is my son Henry Poundstone, junior. While Henry is a young man, his career in the law has been most gratifying, although he hasn't had as broad an experience as the others I mentioned, and perhaps your choice had better lie between Cadman & Banes and Rodney McKendrick."

"Thank you a thousand times," Mr. Ogilvy murmured, and hung up. "We thought so, Buck, we thought so," he soliloquized. "Yes, Cadman & Banes or Rodney McKendrick may do, but Lord have mercy on the corporate soul of the N. C. O. if I fail to retain Henry Poundstone, junior. What a wise plan it is to look up the relatives of a public official! Well! Forward, men, follow me—to Henry's office."

Henry Poundstone, junior, proved to be the sole inhabitant of one rather bare office in the Cardigan block. Buck had fully resolved to give him a retainer of a thousand dollars, or even more, if he asked for it, but after one look at Henry he cut the appropriation to two hundred and fifty dollars. Young Mr. Poundstone was blonde and frail, with large round spectacles, rabbit teeth, and the swiftly receding chin of the terrapin. Moreover, he was in such a flutter of anticipation over the arrival of a client that Buck deduced two things—to-wit, that the Mayor had telephoned Henry he was apt to have a client, and that as a result of this miracle, Henry was in no fit state to discuss the sordid subject of fees and retainers. Ergo, Mr. Ogilvy decided to obviate such discussion now or in the future. He handed Henry a check for two hundred and fifty dol-

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